United Nations A/C.5/72/16

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 November 2017

Original: English

Seventy-second session
Fifth Committee
Agenda items 136 and 68 (a)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Promotion and protection of the rights of children: promotion and protection of the rights of children

Rights of the child

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Introduction

1. At its 52nd meeting, on 21 November 2017, the Third Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, as orally revised and amended, by a recorded vote of 180 to none, with no abstentions. A statement of the programme budget implications of the draft resolution was before the Committee (A/C.3/72/L.71).

II. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of paragraph 41 (c) of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, the General Assembly would request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to increase her engagement with States, United Nations bodies and agencies, regional organizations and especially subregional organizations, and to increase public awareness activities, including by collecting, assessing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned, in accordance with the existing mandate.

III. Relationship of the proposed requests to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

3. The requested activities referred to in the draft resolution relate to section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, and section 29D, Office of

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Central Support Services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 1) and A/72/6 (Sect. 29D)).

IV. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

4. In order to implement the requests contained in paragraph 41 (c) of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, additional resources would be required to engage and develop further cooperation frameworks with regional and subregional organizations and to substantially increase public awareness regarding all grave violations affecting children in times of conflict.

5. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict would engage subregional organizations, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Andean Community and the Economic Community of West African States. Those subregional organizations encompass one or more country situations that are on the children and armed conflict agenda. Mobilizing States at the subregional level with regard to country situations on the children and armed conflict agenda would help to make them part of the solution in ending ongoing violations and abuses against children affected by armed conflict and preventing future abuse. The organizations would serve as multipliers for the work that any individual country would undertake to end and prevent violations and abuses against children. Such engagement would also be aimed at advancing politically and/or legally binding instruments for strengthening the protection of children affected by armed conflict in the subregion concerned and facilitate programmatic responses when violations and abuses occur. The Special Representative would actively support the organizations in developing tools for effectively addressing the issue of children and armed conflict, such as protocols for the handover to civilian actors of children associated with armed forces or groups, and in mainstreaming the protection of children affected by armed conflict into their advocacy, policies and programmes, including through the appointment of focal points in the organizations to increase high-level advocacy.

6. It is envisioned that collecting lessons learned and raising public awareness will facilitate interactions with parties to conflict when violations against children occur. Best practices can be used to assist parties to conflict that demonstrate a willingness to better protect children by ensuring, for example, that the conduct of hostilities complies with international law. Awareness-raising can also be used to persuade parties to conflict that do not demonstrate such willingness to improve their conduct. By leveraging increased public awareness, political advocacy and direct engagement, parties may display greater receptiveness to improving their conduct and reducing violations against children. Such prevention efforts are part of the core aim of the goals of the Special Representative. In this regard, the Special Representative would also increase existing engagement with regional organizations, such as the European Union, the African Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the League of Arab States. Cooperation with these organizations demonstrates how the United Nations and regional organizations can work together to strengthen the protection of children affected by armed conflict and how these organizations serve as force multipliers for the implementation of the children and armed conflict agenda. These partnerships involve multiple activities to share information on situations involving countries on the children and armed conflict agenda and have the potential to increase or establish new links with other entities such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and various regional research centres in North Africa and the Middle East.

7. Accordingly, it is proposed that two posts of Political Affairs Officer (1 P-5 and 1 P-4) be established, effective 1 January 2018, to engage new actors by expanding the scope of cooperation with international and regional partners, in particular subregional organizations, and to increase public awareness regarding all grave violations affecting children in times of conflict, which includes collecting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned.

8. The incumbent of the post of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) would expand the scope of cooperation with subregional organizations through the provision of technical assistance in the implementation of existing commitments relating to children and armed conflict, including international, regional and national instruments, and in the identification of gaps in normative frameworks, in implementation at the national level, in the monitoring of violations and in the collection and dissemination of information. The incumbent would then identify ways to most effectively address each unique gap, including by developing subregional legally and politically binding obligations to strengthen the protection of children in situations of armed conflict and support the development of longer-term programmatic responses.

9. The incumbent of the post of Political Affairs Officer (P-4) would support the lessons-learned exercise in working with Member States, United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as regional organizations, with the aim of collecting and assessing information on the work carried out over the past 20 years on children and armed conflict. The incumbent would also lead in the dissemination of best practices identified, including through activities to raise public awareness regarding violations and abuses committed against children. In addition, the incumbent would develop new communications tools to distribute information pertaining to children and armed conflict that would ensure the widest possible reach and impact and create new outreach materials that would not only build on the Children, Not Soldiers campaign but also target all six grave violations against children and be aimed at a broader audience.

10. Resources would also be required for travel to regional areas with one or more country situations on the children and armed conflict agenda, in order to: (a) provide technical assistance in implementing existing commitments on children and armed conflict as a means to expand the scope of cooperation with subregional organizations; and (b) collect and assess best practices as a means to raise public awareness and reduce violations against children. Remote business practices such as videoconferences are not effective for attaining the objectives of such travel.

11. Additional resource requirements related to the establishment of the two posts include communications, supplies, information technology services and equipment, alteration of premises, rental of premises, and office furniture in line with the standard common services costs for New York.

V. Financial implications of the proposals

12. To implement the requests contained in paragraph 41 (c) of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, additional requirements in the amount of $671,800 (including a non-recurrent provision in the amount of $86,200) would arise under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, and section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. The details regarding these additional requirements are provided in the table below.

(United States dollars)

	Resource requirements
Section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	
Posts: 2 Political Affairs Officer (1 P-5 and 1 P-4)	442 700
Travel of staff	70 000
Contractual services	6 500
General operating expenses	2 800
Furniture and equipment	2 800
Subtotal, section 1	**524 800**
Section 29D, Office of Central Support Services	
General operating expenses	126 400
Furniture and equipment	20 600
Subtotal, section 29D	**147 000**
Total	**671 800**

VI. Potential for absorption during the biennium 2018–2019

13. No provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the implementation of the activities requested in paragraph 41 (c) of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1. It is not possible to identify activities within the sections concerned of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium. It is therefore necessary that additional resources in the amount of $671,800 be provided through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019.

VII. Contingency fund

14. Under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget.

VIII. Conclusion and action required of the General Assembly

15. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, additional resource requirements in the amount of $671,800 for 2018–2019, comprising $524,800 under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, and $147,000 under section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, would arise under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. The amount of $671,800 would require an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019 to be approved by the General Assembly and, as such, would represent a charge against the contingency fund. In addition, an amount of $50,000 would also be required under section 36, Staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**

16. **The General Assembly is requested to approve the establishment of two posts (1 P-5 and 1 P-4) effective 1 January 2018, under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.**